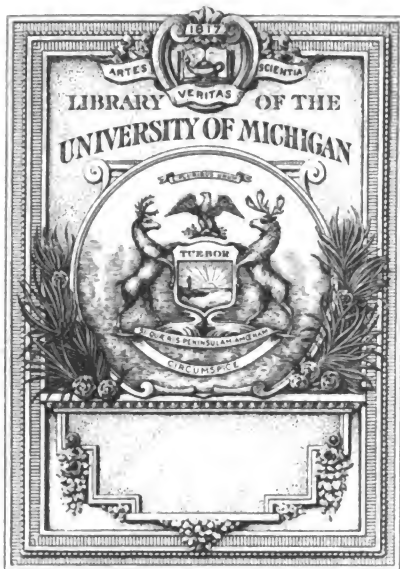


The book of the American's creed

William Tyler Page



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WILLIAM HENRY WAIT, PH.D.

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THE NATIONAL CAPITOL

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The Book of The American's Creed



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American Revolution



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THE AMERICAN'S CREED

I BELIEVE IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AS A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, FOR THE PEOPLE; WHOSE JUST POWERS ARE DERIVED FROM THE CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED; A DEMOCRACY IN A REPUBLIC; A SOVEREIGN NATION OF MANY SOVEREIGN STATES; A PERFECT UNION, ONE AND INSEPARABLE; ESTABLISHED UPON THOSE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM, EQUALITY, JUSTICE, AND HUMANITY FOR WHICH AMERICAN PATRIOTS SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES AND FORTUNES.

I THEREFORE BELIEVE IT IS MY DUTY TO MY COUNTRY TO LOVE IT; TO SUPPORT ITS CONSTITUTION; TO OBEY ITS LAWS; TO RESPECT ITS FLAG; AND TO DEFEND IT AGAINST ALL ENEMIES.

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Foreword

The American's Creed sums up the things which America stands for and which have made America great. It sets forth the duties of American citizens as well as their rights and privileges.

Yet, this summary of American political faith is not to be used or thought of in a narrow or selfish spirit; for there has been nothing narrow or selfish about the great principles of representative democracy, which had their first and fullest growth in America.

The American's Creed has twelve historical phrases or parts, and the whole of it is expressed in just one hundred words.



GEORGE WASHINGTON

-I-

We believe in the United States of America because history shows us that our form of government has provided the greatest measure of liberty, together with the greatest amount of happiness, for the greatest number of people.

The United States has proved that a government of the people may not only be free but also good and strong.

For three hundred years and more, America has been a haven of refuge for all

Self-	who have sought its shores.
Government	In each of thirteen colonies
Dependent	the first settlers learned
upon	to love freedom and to
Self-	govern themselves. From
Control	



the beginning, the people in each colony learned, and in large measure practiced, the greatest political principle ever discovered: that *"Self-government may be added to self-control, and with it man's right to life, liberty, and*

freedom of conscience."

The successful use of this political principle was as great an achievement as the discovery of the New World. Yet it is so simple that it may be applied anywhere. Let even the smallest children in our schools learn how to control themselves and they may practice the principle of self-government just as well as their

elders. When the United States took charge of the government of Cuba after the War with Spain, the schools of that Island were organized in little "School Republics," where the children themselves learned to maintain order and make their own laws and regulations. Their fathers had not yet learned how to control themselves and thereby create a firm government, for the men of Cuba began to fight over their elections, and the United States had to interfere to protect the Cubans from themselves. No country may be safe or strong until the people learn self-control.

Before the development of liberty in America, rulers of countries all over the world acted on the principle that the people exist for the good of the Government or of those in

Governments
Exist for
the Good of
the People

the world acted on the
principle that the people
exist for the good of the
Government or of those in

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control of the Government. America first firmly established the doctrine that governments should exist for the good of the people.

The United States of America, as given in the first complete clause of the Creed, is the official title of our country. It is stamped on official documents and on coins and currency issued by the Government.

-II-

We believe in the United States of America as a government of the people, by the people, for the people. This means *all the people*. Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, and the other signers of the Declaration of Independence did not aim to set up a government by or for any one class of people. Our government is not a rich man's government, or a poor man's government, or a middle man's government. *It belongs to all alike.*

In America, poor men have become rich, and, again, rich men have become poor. In either case, they have the same

voice or vote. The leaders in all phases of American life have, for the most part, risen from the ranks of the poor. They



saw opportunity offered them and they made the most of it.

Many of our American Presidents sprang from humble beginnings, among whom may be mentioned Andrew Jackson, William Henry Harrison, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, James A. Garfield, and Grover Cleveland. Of the American Presidents, George Washington only may be rated as a man of large means. Washington was one of the wealthiest men of his day, yet he worked as hard for a

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common cause as the humblest private soldier. In case of failure, he had more to lose. The soldier in the ranks had a chance to save both his life and his property or at least his means of livelihood. Had the Revolution failed, Washington would probably have lost not only his liberty but very likely his life as well, and his property would have been confiscated by the King.

It is said that there are no two leaves on any tree that are exactly alike; so no two people are born with exactly the same talents or tastes. In America, each person is made as free as possible to develop his or her talents, provided only he or she *does not encroach upon the rights and liberties of others.*

For example, in any city block, the man who owns the house in which he lives may not burn it down at his own free

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will even if he does not like it, because the fire would endanger the houses of his neighbors. Another man may own a house, and the Government may even compel him to sell it, should it stand in the way of a great public improvement. Against his wishes, his house may be sold *for a reasonable price* when a public improvement offers the greater good to the whole community.

-III-

Americans believe in a government whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed. This Majority Rule means that the people have an opportunity to express their will at the polls. The majority, who represent every class and kind, must have their will carried out; but, to prevent, as far as possible, the *abuse of their power*, our government provides safeguards to protect the rights of the minority.

These safeguards are among the most important provisions of our Constitution. In countries where the minority is not properly protected, liberty is always in danger or it ceases to exist.

There may be a very large minority that is opposed to the will of the majority; but the minority must accept in peace the decision of the majority as expressed at the polls. In the course of time, this minority, whether it be small or large, may be able to persuade an increasing number of the people to favor its ideas. If the former minority convinces most of the people that it is right, it then becomes the majority.

All of us cannot have things just as we want them. Under our form of government, the majority rules. But this majority should have a sense of justice and right.

Preserving
the Rights
of the
Minority

The more we think of our duty toward others, the better our government will be for all of us.

In some countries there have been, at times, as many civil wars as there have been elections, to the great unhappiness of

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most of the people. Such peoples or nations *lack self-control*. In the language of the athletic field, they are not "good sports"; for they lose their tempers when they are defeated.

Since 1789, many of the countries of the world have, in one way or another, sought to use the American form of government as a model. One of these governments (Czecho-Slovakia) was created in the midst of the World War and its constitution was framed in our Independence Hall at Philadelphia.



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Among the provisions of that government is one which compels every man and woman to vote. In this respect, the people of this new nation believe they have improved upon the Government of the United States, where many otherwise good citizens do not always go to the polls and vote. This fundamental duty of all good citizens is discussed under a later phrase of The American's Creed that sets forth the obligations involved in American citizenship—or *what we owe the Government in return for what it does for us.*

-IV-

We believe in a democracy in a republic,
by which is meant a representative de-
mocracy under a republican
The Golden form of government.

Mean in

Government

A simple or "pure" democ-
racy where everyone may
vote on everything may succeed only in a
small community. In a village, for exam-
ple, all the people may gather and make
laws, *but when a large number of people or
communities are concerned, a free people may
express their will only through the medium
of duly-elected representatives*, whether these
representatives are elected to the town or
city Council, to the State Legislature, or
to the Federal Congress at Washington.



The Constitution of the United States established a *widely extended and powerful representative democracy in a Republic*—a thing that

had never been worked out in the history of the world. This is what the Founders set up; and, in so doing, they hit upon *The Golden Mean between the irresponsible monarch and the irresponsible mob.*

Representative democracy, under a republican form of government, to be successful and stable and strong, requires the greatest amount of training and sound judgment on the part of the people. If the people lack this training and judgment, the reins of government are seized by groups of loud-promising men who use public power for their own selfish ends.

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The shortened phrase, "a democracy in a republic," is based upon the sayings of a number of the framers of the Constitution of the United States. James Madison, often called the "Father of the Constitution," explained its meaning in "The Federalist", a great series of papers prepared to persuade the American people to adopt the "more perfect Union" embodied in the document drawn up by their representatives assembled in the Constitutional Convention of 1787.

It is no great wonder that in those days many good Americans were doubtful about adopting a strong Federal or central government. They were afraid it might tyrannize over the separate States as the King had attempted to tyrannize over the Colonies.

Now that the Federal form of government has proved itself so successful, it

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Political is difficult to understand
Liberty how any one should want
a Plant of to destroy it because every-
Slow Growth thing may not be working
perfectly.

Because, in times of storm or stress, the "Ship of State" may seem to be pitching or rolling unduly, there are those who would have us throw away the rudder and endeavor to put in its place some device of their own.

But neither vessels nor rudders are things of chance. They were developed slowly from the first ideas of hollowed logs, rafts, and rowboats. So with the American form of government; *it is the outgrowth of hundreds of years of suffering and sacrifice in the cause of human freedom. It is the outgrowth not only of the American Revolution, but of the struggles of the first colonists in the New World.*

-V-

We believe in a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States. First, there stands out the great Central Government in the city of Washington, the Federal Capital of the Republic. Under it, in some things, but distinct in others, forty-eight separate State governments are established at their respective State capitals.

The Federal Government and the State Governments

The powers of these State governments are held to be sacred or "sovereign" whenever they do not conflict with the good of all as represented in the Central Government at Washington. Under this dual plan, the people of the United States are

able to live under local laws that suit local conditions. The people of California or of Texas may live, if they wish, quite differently from the people of Illinois or Massachusetts, several thousand miles away. The powers of governing are, therefore, divided between the National Government and the governments of the

forty-eight States.



In 1868, the Supreme Court of the United States declared that "the

preservation of the States, and the maintenance of their governments, are as much within the design and care of the Constitution as the preservation of the Union and the maintenance of the National Government." In 1830, Daniel Webster had expressed the same thought in different words. He said: "The States are un-

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questionably sovereign, so far as their sovereignty is not affected by this supreme law—the United States Constitution. . . . We are all agents of the same supreme power, the people. . . . The national government possesses these powers which it can be shown the people have conferred on it, and no more. All the rest belongs to the State governments, or to the people themselves.”

-VI-

We believe in a perfect Union, one and inseparable. To Americans, it seems that the United States attained, under the Constitution, to as "perfect" a Union as could be devised. However, it may be said that no government made by man can be perfect as long as man, the maker, is himself imperfect. All of us are subject to error, and the best of us, at times, make mistakes; hence, *it should be the constant care and the duty of all good citizens to make or keep our government as nearly "perfect" as possible.*

Our Union is "one and inseparable" because the people have determined that it is best for all the States to remain united

<p>“An Indestruct- ible Union of Inde- structible States”</p>	<p>under a central government, since the people are “govern- ed by their own consent” through their duly-elected representatives.</p>
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The words, “A perfect Union,” are taken from the Preamble to the Constitution. In that Preamble, the Union about to be constructed is referred to as “a more perfect Union” for the reason that the previously existing “Confederation” that had carried the former colonies through the Revolution was found to be too full of weaknesses and imperfections to work out the problems of peace, which are frequently far more difficult than those of war.

Although we may scarcely hope that any government made by man can be perfect, it should be added that the imperfections

<p>The Source of Error</p>	<p>of the American form of Government under the Con-</p>
--------------------------------	--

stitution are usually found to be the fault, *not of the form of our Government*, but of those who, as the servants of the people, conduct the Government.



There are some who are affected by unhappy inequalities of opportunity, or accident, or because of what is sometimes said to be the evil in the nature of man—*evil not to be done away with by any system of government.* Those who have suffered

from injustice should be heard, and, as far as possible, the injustice remedied.

On the other hand, we find, if we but look at them closely enough, that the men who cry the loudest *against the form of our government* are the men who do not work and who do not want to work, but who do want a chance to live on the work of others. These men propose many schemes which they think are new "cure-alls" for political ills. Those who follow the leadership of such men do not know that many, if not all, of
 Political
 "Cure-Alls" their political experiments
 have been tried before, some
 of them many times.

For example, those who advocate ownership of *everything in common* seem quite ignorant of the fact that the first two groups of English colonists started life on this Continent with the idea of owning

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all things in common. In 1607, the settlers at Jamestown, Virginia, held property and produce in common, but the plan resulted in utter failure. Later, in 1620, the Pilgrim Fathers tried a similar scheme at Plymouth, Massachusetts; but this is what their greatest leader and first historian said about it: "Tried sundry years, and that amongst godly and sober men, it shows clearly the vanity of a system which was found to breed much confusion and discontent." Therefore, when "a parcel of land," as private property, was "assigned to every family," "a new spirit was shown" by the settlers. All hands became very industrious and "more corn was planted than otherwise would have been by any means the Government or any other could use."

-VII-

We believe in a government established
upon those principles of freedom, equality,
justice, and humanity for
The Patriot which American patriots
Founders sacrificed their lives and
of the Republic fortunes.

George Washington and
Thomas Jefferson, the soldier and the
statesman, risked their lives and property
to make secure a greater measure of the
principles of freedom, equality, justice, and
humanity than the world had hitherto
known.

Again, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin,
Madison, and their compatriots built slowly
and with great care. They knew that a



hasty structure, set up in anger or on mere discontent, would not endure.

Some of these founders were men of means and high position; but they worked with others less fortunate to create a government for the benefit of all.

Afterward, when other leaders arose from the ranks of the people, they, too, aimed to govern not solely in the interests of some class, but to promote the welfare of all.

It has been said that, "It is easier to die for cause or for country than to live for it." In the first instance, one's life is offered for country or cause in a single supreme effort; in the second, one's life is given to one's

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country through long years of labor and sacrifice. America has ever been the

home of "practical idealists"

"Living
for One's
Country"

who, in every walk of life,
have devoted a great part
of their lives to help cause,

country, and their fellow-men. These patriots of peace, as of war, from the beginning till now, deserve an equal measure of praise in that they offered their "lives and fortunes" on behalf of the principles to which this Republic has been dedicated.

America has welcomed the peoples of other lands and given them a refuge from oppression. Only a few of those who have sought her shores have proved themselves unworthy of her generous welcome and have abused her hospitality. The greater number have united their efforts with native Americans for their own good and for the good of the country of their adop-

tion. Millions of people saw in America the land of freedom and opportunity for themselves and for their children and their children's children. They believed the United States of America to be a country where every man had the best possible chance to make his own way.

On the other hand, every sensible emigrant to these shores, while seeking to better his condition, must agree with every sensible American that there is not now, and never has been, a man-made government which can do away with sorrow, or sickness, or death. All men are not equal *in all things*, for men are born with different talents; but, under the Constitution of the United States, *they are equal before the law*. No law or government, for example, can make a weak man strong; but it is the aim of our Government to protect the weak against the strong.

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The foregoing phrases or parts of The American's Creed are set off in seven groups. These refer to our rights and privileges under the Constitution of the United States. They tell us briefly of our history and set forth our most sacred principles and traditions, sealed with the blood of patriots and lovers of liberty who died that they might establish these principles for their country and for humanity.

The remainder of The American's Creed—all that is in the second and last paragraph of this one-hundred-word summary of American political faith—**Duties and Obligations**—is divided into five parts, making twelve parts in all. These last five parts review our duties and obligations as good citizens of our country. In other words, what we believe we should do for a country which has bestowed such great benefits upon us; what we should do to maintain our freedom and hand it down to posterity.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," and every right or privilege has its accompanying duty or obligation.

-VIII-

“It is my duty to my country to love it”;
for this country first established political
and religious freedom for all men, and it
protects us every day in our “right to life,
liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

John Marshall, the great Chief Justice of
the United States Supreme Court, has said

that ours is “A government
“A Govern- of laws and not of men.”
ment of Laws
and Not of
Men” Nevertheless, we think of
our country in terms of its

great leaders. Our country
has honored these leaders and they, in turn,
have honored our country and have
helped to make it what it is to-day in the
family of nations and peoples of the earth.

We should, therefore, aim to make ourselves worthy of such a past and worthy of the men who have lived for their



country, or gave up their lives for it. *We should strive so to do our part that we in turn will be honored by those who follow after.*

What does our country or Government do for us beyond offering us protection against violence at home and invasion from abroad?

Many things; but let us take a single illustration. Millions are spent in public education every year. At little or no cost to himself, the poor man may educate the largest of families at great expense to the Government. In so providing for schools and education, we are carrying out

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the last instructions of George Washington, who said: "Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."

The most valuable thing in the world is human liberty. That was what America

established and that is what

The Most Valuable Thing in the World America preserves for us now. We do not always realize the value of human liberty because

it has been handed down to us from the founders and builders of the Union. It has, however, become a part of our being, and we should more fully realize its value if some group or class of men should attempt to take it away from us.



SIGNING OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

-IX-

To support its Constitution is to maintain the foundation and support the framework of our country or Government.

Every political privilege we enjoy or have is based upon the Constitution of the United States. There are those who have tried to take away all the safeguards of the Constitution or do away with it altogether, because it protects property rights or the ownership of what we have. These persons may be compared to the grasshopper that idled away the summer and then when winter came on went to the industrious ant and demanded a share in her savings "as a natural right."



In spite of all talk to the contrary, the man who has built or bought for himself and his family a house, will never welcome any order which would compel him to share it with one who has not so provided for himself. The Constitu-

tion protects a man in his right to have his own house and home.

Again, the working-man's son, who, by selling newspapers after school hours, has come to own a penknife, is likewise protected in that ownership under the Constitution. If the boy be American-born, the Constitution has already conferred upon him the privileges of citizenship;

while his father, if foreign-born, may not only become an American citizen, but he may even aspire to hold any office under the Constitution except only that of President or Vice-President.

Abraham Lincoln, in speaking to a group of men, some of whom desired to seize the property of others "as a natural right," said: "Property is the fruit of labor; property is desirable; is a positive good in the world. . . . Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence when built."

In saying this, the man who sprang from the humblest beginnings of any of our Presidents was putting into simple language what had already been expressed by George Washington, the "Father of His

Country," in his famous Farewell Address to the American people. In this address, Washington had expressed the earnest hope that the Government of the United States would ever be able "to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property."

There can be no question whether or not government shall remain; for men cannot

The Ne- cessity for Some Form of Govern- ment	live apart from their fellow- men. We support what we have in the Constitution, not because we insist it is absolutely perfect, but be-
--	---

cause we have found it good and useful. Those who would have us give it up at once for something that they think they see may be likened to the dog that dropped the meat he was carrying in order to seize another piece he thought he saw in the smooth surface of the water over which he stood.

All the objects of the Constitution are set forth in the Preamble or foreword of that document, which reads as follows: "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

The whole Constitution, including all the Amendments, is not very long; but that part of the Constitution which affects each of us in our daily life, insures our rights, and protects us in life and property, is amazingly brief when we come to think how much it means to us and the hundreds of millions of people that have lived under it since it was drawn up about one hundred and fifty years ago. It has, therefore,

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been rightly said: "It is the duty of every man, woman, or child in the United States of America to defend the Constitution, with his life, if necessary, against those who seek to destroy it." Such, in effect, was the farewell message of George Washington.

-X-

When we say that we believe it is our duty to our country "to obey its laws," we refer first to the laws made by the Federal Government or by the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, the two bodies which together form Congress.

The powers of Congress are not only stated in the body of the Constitution,

but it is made clear that
The Source of Laws these powers are granted
Lies in the by the people.

People The source, therefore, of
all the powers of Congress
lies in the people, whose delegates drew
up the Constitution and provided the

people with the means of changing it. New laws are ever being made to meet new conditions, and old laws or unwise ones may be changed or done away with in accordance with the will or wishes of the majority

of the people.

Very often we may learn by history—that is, by our experience and the experience of others—the value of whatever is proposed in the place of what now is.



The trouble with the man who would upturn everything now existing, said one who had formerly been an advocate of violent change, is that, *“He has no historical sense. In his impetuous ardor to realize an ideal, he does not attempt to under-*

stand the institutions of to-day. He does not glimpse the agony of the ages which have brought us up to our present system. He blinds his eyes to the awful gulf which lies waiting to swallow us if our system should be overthrown wholly and at once."

Now there are laws under which we live that are made by bodies other than the Congress of the National Government sitting at Washington. These bodies are State legislatures, and city, town, and county councils. One town or city may have an ordinance or law requiring dogs to be muzzled while on the street. Another town may not have such a law. Automobiles are permitted to go 15 miles an hour through the streets of one town, 12 miles in another, and 10 in a third. With these laws, the Federal Government has nothing to do. Our government was so

**Federal and
Local Laws** have an ordinance or law re-
quiring dogs to be muzzled
while on the street. An-

constructed that the people of each community or of each State may enact their own local laws to suit themselves, provided that these laws do not interfere with the general good of the whole country or run contrary to the laws of Congress.

When greatly excited or aroused, people—at times people in every station in life—are apt to become thoughtless or unreasonable. Under such circumstances, if they had the power to act immediately in changing our laws or system of government in accord with the moods of a moment, they would be likely to make grave errors, from the effects of which it might take years for the country to recover.

☞ We have a wonderful system of government. If abuses arise under it, the remedy lies in the hands of the people. If they have been misled into voting for the wrong kind of public servants, they must go to



the polls and by their ballots turn out of office those who have betrayed their trust and see that other officials are set up in their places. But, as "an ounce of pre-

**The Remedy
for Abuses
of Public
Trust**

vention is worth a pound of cure," it is better by far to be careful in the first selection and see that those nominated for office are men and women of high character, good reputation, and soundness of judgment, regardless of their position in life. A strong system of government conducted by a good type of public servant is the best possible combination. It is one that will make for the greatest good for the greatest number.

At times, some of our laws may seem burdensome. Persons may be arrested for walking on the grass in the city squares. They did not mean any harm, and they,

alone, may not have done any harm; but if everybody walked on the grass there would be no grass left to look at and gladden the eyes of the sick or weary. On the other hand, in almost everything we do, the law protects us against evil. If there were not severe laws about making counterfeit money or false weights and measures, we should never be sure or safe in buying, unless we knew all about the thing itself or the person selling it.

Laws, therefore, protect us every day of our lives, yet there are some people, protected like the rest of us in a thousand things, who are inclined to find fault with all law and government because a few laws are annoying or apparently unnecessary.

A tyrant is one who has too much power, and abuses it. A man or group of men are also just as likely to abuse power when too much of it is placed in their hands.

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When one speaks of tyrants, one is apt to think of kings, but the worst tyrants have not always been kings. During the French Revolution, the people gained too much power and, for a time, their tyranny was as bad as that of the king against whose tyranny the nation was protesting. The French people won liberty too suddenly. They had not had proper opportunity to learn self-control. They could not patiently plan or follow a plan of government. They felt compelled to rely on, first a military dictator and then a king again. Later, however, they learned to rule themselves, and France became a republic.

At first, it was thought that the Government of the United States would fail; but the American people, through years of self-government as colonists and settlers, had learned self-control. There-

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fore, they did not fail, although a few scattered groups tried to overthrow the new government in order immediately to redress by violent means what they felt was wrong.

-XI-

We believe that it is our duty to our country to respect its flag. The flag of the United States is often spoken of as the "Star-Spangled Banner," these being the words of Francis Scott Key, who gave it that title after a sleepless night of waiting and watching to see if it would still be waving over the ramparts of the fort which defended the city of Baltimore against the attack of an invading foe.

We respect the flag as the sign or symbol of our country. To the people of other and less fortunate nations, the Star-Spangled Banner has floated aloft as the sign of refuge from oppression. Autocrats have feared and hated it. Because the

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"The Star-Spangled Banner" anthem of Francis Scott Key was written especially in honor of the flag, it has become the American custom to stand when it is played or sung.

The flag must not be used for base or for selfish purposes. It must not be used as an advertisement of goods for sale; it must not be draped about a thing or person; and it must not be trailed in the dust.



-XII-

Finally, The American's Creed expresses our belief that it is our duty to our country to defend it against all enemies.

As soon as this statement meets the eye, we begin to think of all those patriots who defended our country in battle against a foreign foe, from the day when colonists fought against invasion to those who fought to insure the safety and honor of the Republic against the threats and aggressions of a great military empire in the World War of the twentieth century.

But in drawing a picture of the foreign foes of our Government and Constitution, we must not forget those who would attack it from within. In the oath of al-

Foes legiance to the Government,
Abroad sworn to by those who would be-
and at come American citizens and by
Home those who take office under our
form of government, the person taking the
oath swears or affirms to "support and
defend the Constitution of the United
States *against all enemies, foreign and
domestic.*"

A few men have sought to make a living,
not by work, but by talk intended to arouse
other people. These men want to over-
throw the government and all of the
existing order of things; for, in the turmoil
that they would expect to follow, they
would seize power and property. They are
selfish and vicious. People very often
see through them and their designs, so
that they are not so dangerous as others
who also work for the overthrow of
government but who are earnest and sin-

cere. These latter are misguided. They see much that is evil in the world. This evil lies in human greed and selfishness either in individuals or in groups.



They want to right all evils at once and by force, even if everything has to be turned upside down. When, however, these earnest reformers study the lessons of history, they begin to see the light, and they turn in to help to make better that which we have rather than attempt to destroy it.

Civilization is a product of government and is the result of man's success in raising himself above the level of beasts. The moment men get together and agree to any kind of plan, civilization begins. By

Civilization and Good Citizenship means of government, civilization aims to increase human happiness by restraining wrong and by protecting the weak. Should these first aims of government be given up, men would again become savages, and nothing would be safe. Every man's life would be in the hands of those stronger than he. So would his wife, his children, his home, and everything he may possess.

A good citizen is one who knows how to live with his neighbors. No baby is born a good citizen, for a baby does not think of any one but himself. A baby may, and does, however, grow into a citizen who is either bad or good, according to training, surroundings, and opportunity. Whatever the baby may become, he or she has a desire to do right—a desire no man or woman ever altogether loses. This is what makes for hope in the world when everything,

at times, seems hopeless. It is the moral instinct—the instinct to be “square,” which, little or big, exists in every human being.

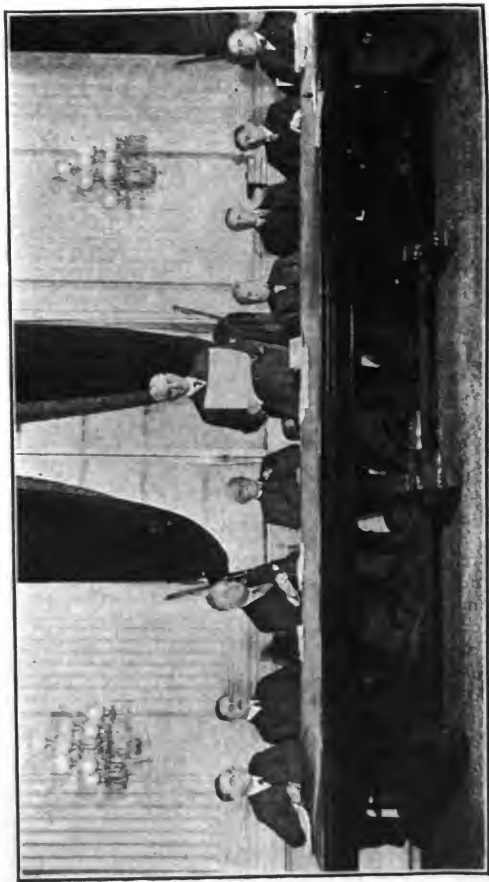
A former foe of our Constitution and Government—once an enemy at home—in offering amends for the mistakes he had made and the evil he had tried to do, said “Social progress comes by work. The hope of the future lies in bringing together the efforts of men under the system we now have.” Those men are most dangerous to everything we hold dear who go about preaching division and who would overthrow our unity in stirring up the hatred of one class against another. If such men have their way, government of the people, by the people, for the people will perish, because it would not then mean *all* the people—only some of them.

ORIGIN OF THE AMERICAN'S CREED

In 1916, Henry Sterling Chapin, of New York, conceived the idea of promoting a country-wide contest for the writing of a National Creed, which should be the briefest possible expression of American political faith, and at the same time embrace the fundamental things most distinctive in American history and tradition.

Early in 1917, the proposed contest was announced at a large gathering of representative American authors, artists, and editors. The American Press took up the challenge and a number of the great magazines published editorial articles wishing the plan success.

On behalf of the City of Baltimore, Mayor James H. Preston offered an award



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SCENE IN NATIONAL CAPITOL AT ADOPTION OF THE AMERICAN'S CREED



of \$1,000 for the winning creed. This proposition was accepted in preference to offers by individuals because the prize was proposed in the name of Francis Scott Key and the birthplace of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Committees were appointed to pass upon the creeds submitted: 1. A Committee on Manuscripts, consisting of Porter Emerson Browne, Henry Sterling Chapin, Hermann Hagedorn, William Charles O'Donnell, and a number of representatives from leading American magazines. 2. A Committee on Award, consisting of Matthew Page Andrews, Irvin S. Cobb, Hamlin Garland, Ellen Glasgow, Julian Street, Booth Tarkington, and Charles Hanson Towne. To the Committee on Manuscripts was assigned the duty of selecting the best fifty of the compositions submitted; from these fifty, the Committee on Award was to choose the winner. 3. In addition, a number of distinguished Americans in public life agreed to act as an Advisory

Committee in consultation with the members of the Committee on Award. The President of the United States informally approved of the contest, and many State Governors, United States Senators, and Representatives were enrolled in this Committee, of which the United States Commissioner of Education was, *ex officio*, Chairman.

The editorial offices of the Educational Foundations Magazine in New York City were thrown open as headquarters of the Committee on Manuscripts, where, from every State in the Union, several thousand creeds were forwarded. Each contestant was required to distinguish, by some peculiar mark, the origin or authorship of the composition submitted; and each was required to enclose therewith a sealed envelope containing the name and address of the contestant. All manuscripts, together with their sealed envelopes, were numbered, in the order of their receipt, by the Committee in charge.

Among the leading fifty compositions set aside by the Committee on Manuscripts was "No. 384." This became the choice of the Committee on Award and received the final endorsement of the members of the Advisory Committee. Consequently, when the sealed envelope enclosed with "No. 384" was opened, it was found that its author was William Tyler Page of Friendship Heights, a suburb of the National Capital.

Prompt inquiry showed Mr. Page to be a lineal descendant of Carter Braxton, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and that he was peculiarly equipped to write the simplest and most comprehensive summary of American faith, for the reason that, over and above his special studies in constitutional government, he had made a life-time practice of retiring to his library every Fourth of July to spend the day in careful study of the great documents of American history.

Furthermore, by a remarkable coin-

cidence, it developed that William Tyler Page, the author of *The American's Creed*, as he had named it, was born in Frederick, Maryland, the birthplace of Francis Scott Key, and that he had received his education in the public schools of Baltimore, where, in 1814, Key had composed the National Anthem.

The American's Creed was selected by the Committee on Award and passed upon, in private, by the members of the Advisory Committee in March, 1918, but the ceremony at which the Creed was publicly announced took place in the Office Building of the House of Representatives, April 3, 1918; and it was first published from Press dispatches throughout the nation on the following day. The entire proceedings, together with the official reprinting of *The American's Creed*, appeared in the *Congressional Record* of April 13.

Within a week after the publication of the Creed, the ninety thousand children in the public schools of Baltimore were recit-

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ing it. Immediately, the Pittsburg Board of Trade set a like example to adult organizations, especially patriotic bodies and civic societies, many of which have established the reciting of The American's Creed as part of their exercises on special occasions. Possibly, throughout the United States, from Maine to Texas and from Washington State to Florida, as many as two million children learned the Creed before the close of that school year.

To further this movement, and in order to reach not two but twenty million children, in fact, Americans everywhere, the organization of the Creed Contest Committee was extended and funds for limited expenses were provided by patriotic citizens. A National Executive Council was formed, membership in which was opened to all who would help by volunteer work, ideas, or contributions, while the active work has been directed by a special Committee on Publication.

Both the Executive Council and the

Committee on Publication "aim, in the interest of good citizenship, to spread a knowledge of the authorized version of The American's Creed;" while the work of the Committee has been broadened and aided by many of the oldest and largest of the organizations of the United States. Coöperation is welcomed whenever these organizations, their members, or individual citizens, either in a local or a national way, conform to the simple aims of the Executive Council.

Hundreds of "human interest" stories reached Creed headquarters in Washington, Baltimore, and New York, of the popular welcome with which the Creed was received. Congressmen who, in April, had approved of the Creed in the House, visited Europe in August and found the Creed posted on trees and trenches at the Front. The French, in a free Republic first inspired by American example, showed exceptional interest in their own translation, while in the United States the

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Department of the Interior provided for parallel versions in the languages of our foreign-born citizens.

To the Creed Committee there came the following story from a Pennsylvania town. "Somewhere" in that State, Federal officials had searched in vain for a young man who had succeeded in dodging the summons which had been sent out calling him to the colors for the defense of his country. The young man was not a coward, but he had been led astray by false teaching or alien propaganda. Somehow, or in some way, a copy of a special edition of *The American's Creed* fell into his hands. Patriotic speeches and arguments of all kinds he had heard in abundance, but *The American's Creed* showed briefly and forcefully the very structure of the American Government, the nature of the freedom enjoyed by its citizens under its institutions, and the duty of those citizens to defend such institutions "against all enemies." The young man was con-

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vinced. Forthwith, he went before the Draft Board of his home community, laid before its officials his copy of The American's Creed, saying: "The American's Creed is right; I was wrong. I am ready to do my duty to my country."

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITIES UPON WHICH THE AMERICAN'S CREED IS BASED*

"The United States of America:" Preamble, Constitution of the United States; see, also, enacting and resolving clauses of bills in joint resolutions brought before Congress; diplomatic correspondence; United States currency.

"A government of the people, by the people, for the people:" Preamble Constitution of United States; writings of Chief Justice Marshall, Thomas Jefferson, and Daniel Webster; Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address.

"Whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed:" Early expressions of the founders of the first colony in America; Thomas Jefferson in Declaration of Independence.

"A democracy in a republic:" James Madison in "The Federalist" No. X; writings of other authorities contemporary.

"A sovereign Nation of many sovereign States:" "E pluribus unum," Great Seal of United States; writings of founders of the Republic; Webster's speech, January 26, 1830; Article VI of Constitution, also Amendment X, and ruling of the United States Supreme Court.

"A perfect Union:" Preamble to Constitution of United States.

"One and inseparable:" Speech of Daniel Webster, January 26, 1830; United States Supreme Court ruling, 7 Wallace.

*See *Congressional Record* No. 102, April 13, 1918.

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"Established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes:" Declaration of Independence.

"I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it:" Nathan Hale; Stephen Decatur; George Washington; John Hancock, and other founders of the Republic.

"To support its Constitution:" Oath of Allegiance, Section 1757, Revised Statutes of the United States.

"To obey its laws:" Washington's Farewell Address; sayings of other founders and builders of the Republic.

"To respect its flag:" Army and Navy regulations; War Department circular on flag etiquette; writings of American leaders and builders.

"And to defend it against all enemies:" Oath of Allegiance, Section 1757, Revised Statutes of the United States; also writings of founders and builders of the Republic.

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